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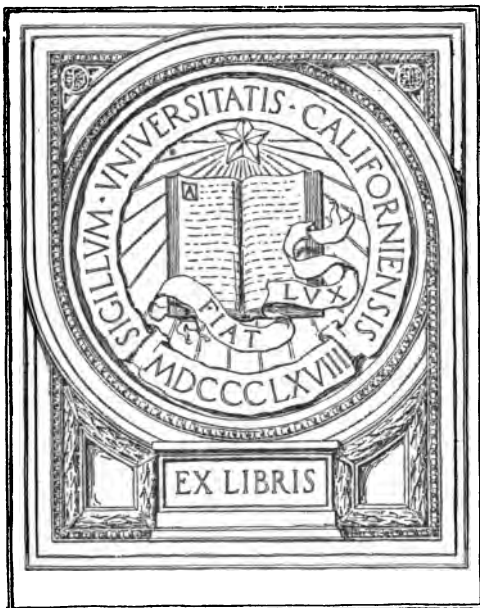
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IN FLIGHT

R. M. C.



GIFT OF



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IN FLIGHT

IN FLIGHT

BY

ROSALIE M. CODY



THEY
ARE
NOT
TO BE
FORGOTTEN

New York

DUFFIELD AND COMPANY

1916

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TO THE
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TO THE FEW WHO WILL CARE

THANKS are due to the editors of various periodicals, for their courteous permission to reprint many of the following poems.

IN FLIGHT

Bright-winged butterflies of thoughts

Go floating, floating by;

Oh, for a golden net of words

To catch them as they fly!

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I
SONNETS

WITH SEAS BETWEEN

THOSE loved ones gathered round the friendly
board—

The picture haunts me by this alien sea :
What wealth upon my life has each outpoured
Of boundless, openhearted sympathy.
The smile that spoke a welcome without word,
Dispelling loneliness as sun the dew ;
The clasp of hand which trust of heart conferred ;
For these the wanderer yearns the wide world
through.

Though swelling seas and mountain height divide,
My thoughts o'erleap them to the moment when
Your door on welcoming hinge once more flung
wide

Shall bid me gladly enter in again.
Before my eyes rise minaret and dome,—
My heart sees only that dear, distant home.

HER HYACINTHS

If I had but two piasters, with one I would buy bread and feed my body. With the other I would buy hyacinths and feed my soul.—*Mohammed*.

HER days are filled with toil and homely cares ;

It would not seem a life to make one glad,

Yet with a cheery smile she onward fares,

And every day some heart is left less sad.

Word-pictures paint a scene for sightless eyes,

A call to courage lights a lamp of hope,

And fainting resolution, with surprise

Awakens, strong with stubborn fate to cope.

So all along her weary way upspringing,

Sweet flowers of remembrance, pure and fair,

Their wondrous fragrance to the air are flinging,

And blessings turn to blossoms everywhere.

Thus hyacinths she buys to feed her soul,

And love surrounds her like an aureole.

THE KING

In olden time, when heralds came apace
And boldly challenged in the Kingly name,
Great gates of brazen bolts and massive frame
Obeyed the summons, and straightway gave place.
All custom changes with a changing race,
But evermore has this remained the same
Since first, with power, demand for ingress came
From him who carried high the royal mace.
To-day, all beetling barricades go down
At name of him who lightly wears the crown;
And baffling walls in sudden ruin fall
When loudly rings, and rings again the call,
"Give way! Give way! The monarch comes, in
truth,
"Clear-eyed, broad-chested, lion-hearted Youth!"

THE DREAM

In the young morning, when the lifted face
Glow with the color of the eastern beam,
We lightly think of death as of a dream
That hides afar some unsubstantial grace.
But scorching noontide, coming on apace,
Unsheathes a sword and rends with flying gleam
The veil 'twixt things that are and things that
seem—

Lo! Death, black-robed, outreaching to embrace.

This too was seeming. Sunset drawing near
Dissolves in golden light that specter grim
And makes a glory of a vanished fear;
The inner vision clears, while sight grows dim,
And age, serene, unmoved by failing breath,
Reads true: life waits beyond the dream called
death.

IN THE CONVENT

THE shining needle's patient task is wrought ;
Now on her knee she lays the little dress
With arms outstretched—a filmy daintiness—
And bends a look with eager sweetness fraught.
What necromancy works in one swift thought !
A gentle weight upon her seems to press,
And thrilled with sudden yearning to possess,
Quick to her breast the tiny gown is caught.
An instant only—then, with startled glance
She smoothes the snowy folds, her rapture gone,
But trembles, for she feels as in a trance
A baby hand close clinging to her own.
“Sweet Mother, feed my hungry heart !” she cries,
And holds the cross before her tear-filled eyes.

AT DAWN

SHE looked at me with eyes so grave and sweet,
The little girl I stopped upon the street
Because within her faithful arms she bore
A sleeping child, whose sturdy weight was more,
It seemed, than she should lift; but when I said,
"Too much for you to carry, little mother?"
She smiling answered, friendly, unafraid,
"Oh, no, he isn't heavy; he's my brother!"

Happy, she went her way. And as the lark
With welcoming song feels dawn within the dark,
My spirit rose and sang. I visioned then
Great cities growing in the souls of men;
Men counting service as the one great good,—
No weight too heavy borne for brotherhood.

RUPERT BROOKE

I

His picture lingers ever in my thought—
That upturned face with strange prevision
 fraught;

The waving hair, deep brow, and steady eye—
Sweetness and strength with one another vie.
How well the thrilling joys of sense he told,
Each treasure named as miser counts his gold;
With playful tenderness he makes us see
A social sacrament, his cup of tea.
But when upon the quiet garden's charm
Sounded the sudden crash of war's alarm,
He sprang to manhood—flung his day-dreams far,
And went to die beneath the crimson star.
Not poet less, but patriot more, he proved
'Twas England's life, more than his own, he loved.

IN FLIGHT

II

A lonely spot by southern breezes fanned,
The grave where now this "bit of England" sleeps;
But scent of lilac and carnation creeps
From Grantchester to bless the wave-washed
strand.

Home in our hearts he comes from that far land,
And as we bear him onward, no man weeps;
For tears speak not the quickened pulse that leaps
That hero-heart to meet and understand.
How buoyantly he sang his way to death!
My country and my home—his latest breath.
And how triumphantly that song he wed
In measured cadences to martial tread.
Oh, royal welcome waited when he came—
Valhalla's full-voiced chorus of acclaim!
December, 1915

A MEMORIAL ORGAN*

In quiet shadow, standing just apart,
Yet not removed from busy ways of men,
Thou waitest for a master-hand again
To summon music from thy silent heart.
A fitting shrine, devised of memory's art,
For loved ones who beyond their widest ken
Enriched life's harmonies, not dreaming then
How echoes, to this far-off day, would start.

Hark, tones arise like softest cradle song
In tenderness; then, mounting full and strong,
The music voices to the listening ear
Immortal messages of noble cheer.
Through every strain that wings its way above,
Runs the sweet melody of Mother-love.

*Erected in memory of two mothers.

II

THE VIOLET OF POESY

And Other Poems

THE VIOLET OF POESY

THE violet of poesy
Upon a slender stem of thought,
Methinks the triolet must be,
The violet of poesy;
With petals fine, so gracefully
It rises, with sweet fragrance fraught,
The violet of poesy
Upon a slender stem of thought.

My love is like a violet,
The flower sweet I fain would wear;
With daintiness and grace beset
My love is like a violet,
And so I sing in triolet—
This bloom of verse so slight and fair—
My love is like a violet,
The flower sweet I fain would wear.

AT NIGHT

THE dragging fret of day
Has left my spirit, with its impress deep,
A many-furrowed strand;
But Lethe's waves of gray
Are washing in; with soft, recurrent sweep
They smooth the golden sand,
And stealing down the shining path comes Sleep.

OUTLOOK

"Poor little oak leaf
Clinging to the tree,
Blown by every gust of wind,
How lonesome you must be!"

"Fie!" said the oak leaf,
"You needn't pity me!
It's the first time since last Spring
That I've had room to see!"

ROSES

'Tis morning in her garden fair,
And round her shining red-gold hair

The sun a halo throws ;
As with one perfect bloom held high,
She turns, with the enraptured cry,

“Oh, how I love the rose !”

Love's sunshine courses through my veins :
No chilling doubt nor fear restrains

The hope that in me glows.
I catch the lifted hand in mine,
And cry, in ecstasy divine,

“Oh, how I love thee, Rose !”

ON THE RIVER

My love is like a river,
Deep it flows;
Come, cast yourself upon it
Like a rose;
And let it gently bear you,
Light as foam,
Unto that blessed haven
—Home!

THE EYES I LOVE

THEY do not flash and sparkle,
Nor melt with passion's glow;
They do not steal quick glances,
Then droop white eyelids low;
Coquettish arts they know not,
The sunny eyes I love,
The magic power that's in them
They brought from heaven above.
When they are lifted to me,
Those clear, dark, steadfast eyes,
Alight with the glad radiance
Of love's first sweet surprise,
Such constancy looks from them,
Such trust and hope divine,
I cry, "God bless my darling!
Bless God, who made her mine!"

A VALENTINE

A VALENTINE I send to you ;
 'Tis but a sign—
 A valentine,
Oh, sweetheart mine, that I am true,
And this sweet sign belongs to you.
One loving word but send to me ;
 For hope deferred
 One loving word ;
Light as a bird my heart would be
Could you but send that word to me.

TO PHILOMELA

DEAR little Philomel,
Songster from above,
Welcome to a country
Brimful of love.

Trailing clouds of glory
From your shining wings;
That's the good old story
A wise poet sings.

But they needn't tell us
Where you had your birth,—
Haven't you brought heaven
Straight down to earth?

Rest, little Philomel,
For the way was long;
Nestle close to mother's heart
And learn a new song.

May 21, 1916

FRIENDS

A **WEARY** traveler, at close of day
I stop for rest and shelter on my way,
And, lonely stranger in a stranger's room,
I watch the shadow-heralds of the gloom
Steal softly in, and, gliding through the place,
Wrap every object in a fast embrace.
Meanwhile, my wandering gaze moves here and
there,

A rover, idle as my fancies are,
To rest, at last, with half-unconscious looks,
Upon a little shelf of well-worn books
Whose outlined forms but dimly can be seen,
So close the veil of darkness dropped between.
Lo! through the slanted shutter swift there flies
One laggard sunbeam from the western skies;
Straight to the books it flits, a homing dove,
And, in its light, gleam out the names I love!

IN FLIGHT

'Twas there, 'tis gone! But not the grace it lends,
The room, transformed, is full of well-loved
friends.

BLOWS

A WHIPPING-POST for the brute who will maim
With his bludgeon blows a woman's frame;
And shall justice demand of him no toll
Who lashes with words her quivering soul?

SUNWARD

My land lies sloping toward the east,
 Blessed by the sunshine's earliest ray;
The summer rain, with light caress,
 Glides gently down its emerald way.
The downy cover Winter weaves
 Rolls swiftly back in Spring's warm hand,
And sets the happy hillside free,
 For sloping eastward lies my land.

SATISFIED

F. E. D.

THROUGH all the lengthening days of
weary pain,
At restless bidding of a fevered brain
His wandering mind had sought,—and
sought in vain—
Some errant word;
But with the breaking dawn that brought
release,
The pitying angel's voice bade effort cease,
And gently whispered it to him: 'twas
"Peace."
He, smiling, heard.

1906

ON DECORATION DAY

E. H. G.

WHERE sunshine soft drifts gently down

Through Maytime's tender leaves,

And silence lays its soothing touch

Upon the heart that grieves,

A mother and her little child

In hand-clasp warm and sweet

Walked with a quiet reverence

Along Death's grassy street.

No spoken words between them passed ;

Her thoughts were of the dead,

As flowers brought by loving hands

Bestrewed each mossy bed ;

And his dear heart was saddened

By the strangely solemn place,

Till, suddenly, a flitting smile

Lit up his shadowed face.

[26]

IN FLIGHT

It trembled—then shone steadily,
By inner radiance fed,
—’Twas like the sunlight through the leaves
That flickered overhead,—
“Oh, mother, I’m so glad!” he cried,
And stopped to look about,
“Just see! On every soldier’s grave
A flag has blossomed out!”

IN MEMORY

J. B. M.

THE Great Physician, standing calm and strong,
Received with gentleness the suffering throng,
And touching them with healing hands, He
blessed and bade them go;
So one who stood in these our later days
(With voices hushed his name we softly praise)
Awaited, healed, and with his kindness blessed
the child of woe.

Swift burned the fire of his consuming zeal
To lighten weights humanity must feel.
Before our wondering eyes he worked his miracles of will;
He freed the mind, he made the dumb to talk,
And to the maimed he said, "Arise and walk;"
Each cry for help he answered by a deed of
daring skill.

IN FLIGHT

So utterly he knew the human frame
That when for him the ruthless Hunter came,
Whose quarry he had often wrested in the open
field,
He watched each stealthy step as it drew near,
But faced his foe as one who knew no fear,
Till in a last, great victory, he fell upon his
shield.

His life to save the lives of men he gave;
Our benedictions blossom on his grave.

BOND OR FREE

Who fears the worst, dwells in a darkened place
Alive with noisome, formless, fluttering things.
And shrinking backward, shields his covered face
From contact with their black and hateful
wings.

Who hopes the best, goes forth with forehead bare,
And to the open blue he lifts his face
And cries, "All good of earth, of sea, of air,
Is mine, by boundless largess of God's grace."

THE BEST GIFTS

Give love!

So lavish in its overflow

That freely bathed within its golden flood

Each seeming ill, transmuted, turns to good.

Give hope!

So subtle in its interchange—

Like life's red current from a generous vein

It feeds the flagging heart made weak by pain.

Give joy!

So vibrant in its steady thrill

That each shall know the Christ-child born again,

And lift the song of glad good will to men.

III FROLIC

HER SUMMER VACATION

First Day. THE house is still,
But I can feel
Your presence fill
Each quiet room
And round me steal
Like rich perfume.

P. S. To know you're resting gives me joy,
Don't worry, now, about your lonely boy.

Second Day. I heard to-night
The latest play;
They call it bright—
I do not know,
For far away
My thoughts would go.

P. S. They flew, my dear, direct to you;
I only needed wings to fly there, too!

IN FLIGHT

Third Day. How dull and drear
Each passing day!
When you are here
So fast they go,
Time disappears
Like melting snow.

P. S. I feel so deucedly depressed!
Much longer, dearest, do you need to rest?

Fourth Day. The house is still;
I seem to feel
Gray specters fill
Each quiet room
And round me steal
In ghostly gloom.

P. S. What madness made me let you roam?
For heaven's sake, my precious wife, come home!

THE SOLEMN TRUTH

His father's very counterpart,
The man that is to be,
He came, our sturdy little son,
And leaned upon my knee.

With overflow of tenderness
I gazed into his eyes,
And longed to cast my horoscope
In those unclouded skies.

"Why do you love your mother so?
Now, tell me truly, sweet!"
"Why, muvver dear," he said, "it's 'cause
You make good sings to eat!"

THE NEW MAID

HER blue eyes mind me of a doll ;

Her flaxen braids are fair to see ;

'Tis truth to say that, all in all,

She's just as Swede as she can be.

A SYMPATHETIC TEAR

A SAD and solemn thing it is
To see a strong man cry.
I gazed in dumb bewilderment
And mutely questioned why.

My author-friend but waved his hand
To slips of varied hue;
“*The Judge* regrets, and *Life* regrets,
Atlantic Monthly, too;

“*The Century* and *Harper’s* both,—
They all regret—oh, dear!
The world’s so full of sorry men
It makes me drop a tear.”

THEIR BEASTLY GOSSIP

Said the ant's little niece to the bee, "Yes, it's out !

Why shouldn't it be with you buzzing about,

And others by no means too small to refuse

To go mousing around for a choice bit of news ?

The bear facts are these : It has long been a-bruin ;

That tail-bearing squirrel suspected their wooin' ,

And whispered the parrot, who talks without

reason,

That even the bat would see things in due

season.

The owl shut her eyes, and with face sanctimoni-

ous,

At first just asked, 'Whoo ?' then hoped 'twas

erroneous,

And said, if 'twere not, she was morally certain

That Mr. Cock Sparrow, as usual, was flirtin'.

Then the crow boldly claimed he could offer good

caws

IN FLIGHT

Why they should not be joined, if they cared for
the laws.

The hyena laughed, and the catamount grinned,
And, all things together, past bearing they
sinned.

It really was lion of unusual scope,
And I say it's no wonder it made antelope!"

Said the bee to the ant, as he poised to take wing,
"Do me justice! I never intended to sting!

We esteem your dear ant, and will prove our
good will

By a great welcome home that shall quite fill
the bill.

We'll have it at night, in the gnu city park,
And you just mark my words, there will be a big
lark.

We'll say to them all, 'If a jaguar after
Don't take it in gossip, but have one of laugh-
ter!'

IN FLIGHT

Just write your new uncle to chirrup at once,
And your ant to forget all these beastly affronts,
For we know what is due to our friends newly
wed,
And the peacocks are planning a post-nuptial
spread.
From hillside and valley their deer friends are
coming—
Three cheers and a tiger! Now I must be hum-
ming!"

A WARM FIGHT

"You sing too loud!" The fire roared

At the kettle, with much heat.

Said she, "Your way of blazing out

At me is far from sweet;

You quite deserve to be put out!

To see it I'd be glad!

Your conduct fairly makes me boil,

And my cover's hopping mad!"

MAKING THINGS DO

WHEN Mother gets my last year's coat
And scans it carefully,
I'm hoping every minute
Till she sighs, and says to me,
"Re-lined, 'twill seem almost like new—
I think, dear, we can make it do."

When Papa takes my half-worn shoes
And turns them every way,
I know beforehand just the words
That he is sure to say:
It's "Well, my child, they're not worn through,
Re-soled, you'll have to make them do."

And when, next day, that Sylvia Brown
Puts out, with saucy flirt,
Her shiny, patent leather shoe,
I lengthen down my skirt

IN FLIGHT

And think, "I s'pose she never knew
What 'tis to have to make things do."

But worst was when my sister Jane
Tried on her half-worn dress
And said what made me furious,
I may as well confess;
"It's out of style; but sister Sue,
Just as it is, can make it do."

That time I cried—well, yes, I did,
But when my Papa came,
And whispered something low to me,
My face just burned for shame:
He said, "With such a girl as you,
Your daddy's proud to make things do!"

A BORN DIPLOMAT

WITH longing admiration

Wee Nora, three years old,
Gazed on her playmate's locket,
A gem of shining gold.

At last, by dint of coaxing
From her persuasive tongue,
For just "one little minute"
Upon her neck it hung.

Then pausing not an instant
Her image to admire,
This wily little schemer,
With plans for conquest higher,

Looked up with artful sweetness:
"Oh, Arabella Vaughn,
You do look *so much nicer*
Wivout a locket on!"

NED'S BIRTHDAY WISH

THE birthday cake was beautiful,
A mountain high and white,
All trimmed with name and age in red
And candles burning bright.

"Now, children, wish!" said mamma dear,
"And blow the candles out!"
I see that Ned is thinking hard,
What can it be about?"

"I wish—I wish——" said Ned, and paused,
Another look to take,
"I wish," he finished solemnly,
"It was a bigger cake!"

SANTA'S SUBSTITUTE

LITTLE baby daughter,
Pretty lips a-pout,
In a fit of temper
Tossed her things about;
Till I drew her to me
Saying, "I've been told
Santa only visits
Children good as gold."
Downcast little figure
Sudden sat erect;
"Good each minute, Mama?
That's too much to 'spect!
S'pose he shouldn't come here
With the toys he brings,
Couldn't you just get me
Some little bits of things?"

MERRY CHRISTMAS

WITHIN a shaded upper room

A gentle lady lies,

The glow of fever on her cheek

And blazing in her eyes.

Beside her, nurse and doctor seek

To quiet her in vain;

With restless, eager hand she writes

Upon the counterpane

Imaginary labels to

Imaginary gifts,

Which loud she reads, as on her arm

Her weary frame she lifts.

"From baby-girl to father dear;"

"To mother, from Helene;"

"The season's greetings to my friend,"

"With love from brother Gene."

IN FLIGHT

"Now bring the baby ribbon here,
And hand the parcels—so.
The red goes with the holly,
The white with mistletoe."

Then endless, unseen packages,
With trembling hand she ties,
Stopping, at last, but not to rest,
"The telephone!" she cries.

"Call the expressman instantly!
I feel a—little—tired—
There! Merry, merry Christmas!"
She sank back and expired.

IV
THROUGH THE YEAR

JANUARY BELLS

An old-fashioned sleighing idyl

THE air is clear and crisp and bright,
The snow is sparkling, smooth and white,
And tempted by their magic might
The bells and I are out.

Now gliding swiftly down the street
My happy eyes with rapture greet
Two dainty forms with faces sweet.
Ah, ha! The belles are out.

I quickly stop, and, not denied
The boon I asked, soon side by side,
With laugh and jest away we glide,
The belles and I are out!

Swift as the wind, with hearts so gay,
We dash along a crowded way,
When—cruel fate upsets my sleigh!
The belles and I are out!

IN FLIGHT

Excuses uttered o'er and o'er
Avail me naught; we reach the door
And coldly part. Forevermore
The belles and I are out!

FEBRUARY SECOND

S. H. S.

BROTHER GROUNDHOG, our Te Salutamus

We offer again, as of yore,
But your prophecies kind, the most of us find
We simply don't need any more.

We are voicing the voice of the people,
There's hardly a shadow of doubt,
To the average brain it's a terrible strain
To follow your "in" and your "out."

And the man is a real rara avis
Who, suddenly asked to explain,
Whether seeing your shade means spring soon
or delayed,
Doesn't stammer and struggle in vain.

So, a fig for your prognostications!
We're tired of this annual fuss!

[55]

IN FLIGHT

And if sunshine you see—or whatever it be—
You can't cast a shadow on us.

For we know that the winter is going,
We know that the springtime is near,
With its birds and its flowers and its sunshiny
hours,
To whisper of hope and good cheer.

For a birthday celebration.

FORERUNNERS

MARCH

SPRING is coming—coming fast!

Whispering breezes hurry past;

Something brewing!

Listen! They are telling how

There are pussy-willows now

Almost mewling.

Through the ice the little brook,

Laughing, runs to take a look,

Brightly blinking;

While the leaves, in peaked hoods,

Nod and beckon in the woods,

Slyly winking.

Secrets! Secrets in the air!

Round about the barnyard bare

Speeds Old Dobbin;

And before him—see, there goes

On his blue and yellow toes

The first robin!

APRIL RAIN

It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining daffodils;
In every dimpled drop I see
Wild flowers on the hills.
The clouds of gray engulf the day
And overwhelm the town—
It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining roses down.

It isn't raining rain to me,
But fields of clover bloom,
Where any buccaneering bee
May find a bed and room.
A health unto the happy,
A fig for him who frets—
It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining violets.

ROBERT LOVEMAN

APRIL SNOW

To the author of "April Rain."

It isn't snowing snow to me,
It's snowing aches and ills;
In every tiny flake I see
A dozen doctor's bills.
The clouds of gray engulf the day
And overwhelm the town;
It isn't snowing snow to me,
It's snowing trouble down.
It isn't snowing snow to me,
It's snowing noses blue;
Goose-pimples, shivers, rheumatiz,
And influenza, too.

IN FLIGHT

A health unto the summer!

But you can make your bets,
It isn't snowing snow to me,
It's snowing vile regrets.

MAY

WANT to banish April's tears,

You, May?

Laugh away our doubts and fears,

You, May?

Flood the earth with sunshine gay,

And through every livelong day

Scatter blossoms on our way?

You may.

Want to promise then still more,

You, May?

Tell us all June holds in store,

You, May?

She'll be welcome—never fear!

But we know who is the dear

Dainty lady of the year—

You, May!

JUNE

JUNE! June! June! June!

Rollicking, frolicking, merry-mad tune!

Now the poet must sing

Like a bird on the wing,

With a lilt and a tilt and a lift in the measure,

For the sober old world has gone tipsy with
pleasure,

And his heart beats in time with the magical tune:

Rollicking, frolicking, merry-mad June!

JULY

MIDSUMMER; and the fervent heat

Has swept the lovely garden bare of flowers,
Save for a few intrepid blooms which fling
A gay defiance to the sultry hours.

The scorching heat of circumstance

With blighting power bends many natures low ;
But men of mettle, like the tempered steel,
Gain strength and beauty in its fiery glow.

MY HAY-FEVER SWEETHEART

AUGUST

I LOVE her, and I told her so,
And for an answer teased.
She gave me just a hasty glance,
Then sneezed and sneezed and sneezed.
“Oh, cruel, heartless maid!” I cried;
“My wooing you despise!”
And then I stopped, encouraged, as
I saw her streaming eyes.
But, as I tried to coax her, then,
To listen to my woes,
She took her little handkerchief
And blew her little nose.
I turned, impatiently, to go,
But heard a gentle call;
“Oh, please, please, cub agaid,” it said,
“Cub later id the fall!”

[63]

GOLDEN-ROD

In the days I dreamed,
Time was that you seemed
With your slender torches lightly springing,
Youth's exultant fire,
Buoyant brave desire,
Golden flame from earth to heaven upwinging.

Memory-month you are;
Down the years from far
Come the visions bright of past Septembers;
Golden-rod, to me
Now you seem to be
Of those joyous fires the glowing embers.

September twenty-second

OCTOBER

SWEET Summer turns with parting smile,
And, last of many a dainty wile,
Her silvery veil she sets adrift,
 A gossamer maze.

Down, down it floats, a fairy mist,
Above the land by sunshine kissed,
And lo!—as wondering eyes we lift—
 October haze!

THANKSGIVING

For grief unsuffered, tears unshed,
For clouds that scattered overhead;
For pestilence that came not nigh,
For dangers great that passed us by;
For blood unspilled in wars unfought,
For deeds of wrong and shame unwrought;
For sharp suspicion, soothed, allayed,
For doubt dispelled that made afraid;
For fierce temptation well withstood,
For evil plot which brought forth good;
For weakened links in friendship's chain
That, sorely tested, stood the strain;
For harmless blows with malice dealt,
For base ingratitude unfelt;
For hatred's keen, unuttered word,
For bitter jest, unknown, unheard;
For every evil turned away,
Unmeasured thanks we give to-day.

November, 1907

[66]

CHRISTMAS-WREATH

FIRELIGHT and candlelight

 Illumine all the place;

Best of all the lovelight

 That shines upon her face.

Holly-wreaths bedeck the wall

 And snow-wreaths the ground;

Best of all the little ring

 That wreathes her finger round.

V
SHADOWS

MY WALL OF COMFORTS

ACROSS a still, unshadowed day
A sudden frenzy burned its way.
Fair violets of blue and gold
Were crushed within my frightened hold,
While meadows I had hoped to tread
Lay seared and desolate and dead;
And all the future, wrapped in cloud,
Swept from my sight, a flaming shroud.

How could I hide that blackened waste!
I turned me in a fevered haste,
With hands that trembled, eyes that filled,
And set me straight a wall to build.
Out from the comforts of the past
I brought my treasures—drew them fast.
The loving smiles, the tender care,
The hope, the courage, strength to bear,

IN FLIGHT

The understanding sympathy,
Of all life's gifts the best to me.
Lo! as I placed them, one by one,
All clear and glistening they shone;
Each joy remembered grew a block
Of immemorial granite rock.
Until before me, firm and true,
My wall towered high against the blue.

"Oh, live not in the past!" you say,
Who know not of that darkened day:
My Wall of Comforts builded high
Shall be my shelter till I die.

WHITHER?

BUT yesterday and thou wert here—where hast
thou gone to-day?

I need the hand that held my own so closely all
the way!

With yearning eyes I lift my face unto the bend-
ing sky,

Like phantom armies, steadily the snowy clouds
sweep by:

In sobbing call my voice goes out across the rest-
less wave,

No sound returns—no echo from that deep and
soulless grave.

I turn with pleading, hopeless, and seek the forest
lone,

Mysteriously whispering, the mighty tree-tops
moan.

In frenzy of despair I beat upon the bars of
Death;

IN FLIGHT

"Where went my love who left me in the passing of
a breath?"

For answer only silence, and my heart-beats fall
like lead,

As I listen, listen, listen, at the doorway of the
dead.

1907

BUT ONCE

Oh, loved one, somewhere out of reach
Of clinging hands and calling, calling voice,
Part thou the vail let fall between, and say to me
“Grieve not, but know that I rejoice.”
Or send the sunshine warm of thy dear smile
To flood my empty heart once more,
And lonely years were days, while severed ties
Were cable-bands made fast to yonder shore.

HEART'S WINTER

EARTH holds no colder thing than this,
The grudging, hasty-given kiss
 To lips that wait;
Save one alone—the death-stilled heart,
Past craving love, past suffering smart,
 Avenged by fate.

BELGIUM

August, 1914

THE bells are tolling, tolling,
Their echoes fill the air;
But from their tongues is rolling
No message of despair.
"Come! Come!" they call,
"To stand or fall —..
For Belgium!"

Wild voices swelling, swelling
Tumultuous to the sky;
A nation's chorus, telling
One heart-beat in reply.
"Joy! Joy!" they cry,
"To win or die
For Belgium!"

[77]

IN FLIGHT

November, 1914

An army vast, of broken ranks, drags slowly
through a blighted land

Like some great wave which, rolling back, leaves
ghastly wreckage on the strand.

No tolling bells call loud to arms while answering
voices thrill the air,

But heart-beats stop, to flutter on, half-paralyzed
with slow despair;

For haggard women, footsore, cold, with starving
babes and children wan,

No homes to leave and none to seek—go, hopeless,
blindly journeying on.

“Woe! Woe!” they cry,

“To us who live,

While men must die

For Belgium!”

THE AMERICAN MOTHER

With sorrow-softened face she stands

And folds the heap of snowy gauze

With gentle hands:

For crowding visions fill the air

And make of every thought a prayer:

This piteous work must needs be done

To staunch the blood of someone's son;

That 'tis not mine, my only one,

(Oh, is it sin—this joy within?)

I thank Thee, God!

Could labor hope of rescue bring

The saddened hours would not creep by

On weary wing;

But crowding visions fill the air

And still her thoughts go up in prayer:

For each brave lad whose blood must flow

A mother's heart is bleeding slow;

That mine such anguish does not know

(Oh, dare I say—this shadowed day?)

I bless Thee, God!

[79]

IN FLIGHT

Those mother-hearts! In utter shame
Of ruthless waste, her spirit springs

To burning flame;

And visions crowding all the air

She pours her very soul in prayer:

Thou Son of God, from whose thorn-crown

For son of man red drops ran down,

As in that hour Thy tender thought

Compassion for Thy mother sought,

Oh, look on motherhood to-day

And take this cup of grief away:

In mercy heed our bitter need.

God, give us peace!

December, 1914

VI
A LOVELY DAY

A LOVELY DAY

As friendly voices say, in parting chime,
"Good-bye, dear ones, we've had a lovely time!"
So when I know that I must go away,
I'll say, "Good-bye, we've had a lovely day!"
The clouded skies we've known, the rain, the sleet,
But made the sunshine brighter, flowers more
sweet.

Each hour within my heart is treasured fast,
And each is loveliest because the last.
Their joy is mine forever, come what may;
"Good-bye, good-bye, we've had a lovely day!"

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